

BLUMER AND ASSOCIATES

City of Unalaska Legislative Report

3/1/22

The 120-day constitutional limit to the session, May 17, will be here quicker than we think. At this point not much has happened in Juneau but that's not unusual. House Finance operating budget subcommittees mostly wrapped up their work last week and will be making reports to the full House Finance committee, which will hold public hearings (probably next weekend) and then make amendments. Look for the operations budget to go to the House floor in about two weeks. Likely a couple of days of debate will be followed on the floor.

The bill then goes to the Senate, which has had its own subcommittees at work. The Senate, is also working on the capital budget, will include some items from the federal infrastructure bill. Information on this is still being rolled out, so how much can be in the capital budget is unclear. The Legislature must authorize federal funds to be received before state agencies can use them. Also, much of the federal money goes directly to institutions outside state government, particularly tribes, much of this will require applications for competitive grants. At this point there is still a lot of unknown.

One of the big difference this session from last session is last year they essentially did not address the dividend issue until the end. This year, they are dealing with it much earlier. With all but one legislator being up for re-election, and this being the second and final session of the Legislature, there is more urgency to get this figured out sooner than later.

What further compounds the issue is rising oil prices. It makes it harder for the legislators who support a smaller dividend and easier for those who support a larger dividend. If oil prices stay in the \$90s, or go higher, Alaska will potentially take in billions of additional revenues this year, above what was previously projected. ANS crude has been above \$90/barrel since January 26. And with all the instability now due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the price will likely go even higher.

Keep in mind, Governor Dunleavy's vision is for a 50/50 dividend, plus a supplemental amount to make last year's dividend equal to the 50/50. This combined would be almost \$4,000 per person. While that is unlikely to happen, a \$2,500 dividend, the 50/50 amount that had little traction last year, could be seriously considered this year.

Please consider providing public testimony on bills and budget items that may impact our industry and economy, I will do my best to get you the information as far in advance as possible.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY on the [HB281](#) **Approp: Operating Budget** is scheduled in House Finance on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday this week:

- There is a 2-min limit – make sure your remarks are short and to the point.

- Call-in numbers:
 - Anchorage 907-563-9085;
 - Juneau 907-586-9085; and
 - Statewide [“Off-Net”]: 844-586-9085
 - You can also arrange to testify at your local LIO.
- **Thurs, March 3rd, 2 - 4 p.m.** – Juneau, Sitka, Petersburg, Delta Junction, Tok, Dillingham, Glennallen, Valdez, Wrangell, Homer, Ketchikan, Kodiak, Seward
- **Fri, March 4th, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.** – Fairbanks, Kenai, Mat-Su, Anchorage, Bethel, Cordova, Kotzebue, Nome, Utqiagvik
- **Sat, March 5th, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.** – Statewide [“Off-Net”]

Weekly Schedule

Time	Description
Tue 3/1/22 1:00 PM	BARNES 124 -HOUSE TRANSPORTATION *+ HB 366 LEG. APPROVAL: AK RAILROAD REVENUE BONDS TELECONFERENCED -- Invited & Public Testimony -- += HB 322 AK MARINE HWY SYSTEM VESSEL REPL. FUND TELECONFERENCED -- Public Testimony -- *+ HB 352 CONSULT W/TRIBES TO RENAME GLENN HWY TELECONFERENCED + Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled TELECONFERENCED **Streamed live on AKL.tv**
Fri 3/4/22 8:00 AM	DAVIS 106 -HOUSE EDUCATION *+ HB 350 SCHOOL BOND DEBT REIMBURSEMENT TELECONFERENCED -- Invited & Public Testimony -- += HB 108 CONCURRENT SECONDARY & TRADE SCHOOL TELECONFERENCED += HB 48 AK PERFORMANCE SCHOLARSHIP; ELIGIBILITY TELECONFERENCED + Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled TELECONFERENCED

Here is the link to more information about the committee hearings, at this time of year it is good to check daily if you are watching a hearing as they change frequently.

<http://w3.legis.state.ak.us/index.php?tab2=type%3DAI%26com%3D%26startDate%3D03%2F01%2F2022%26endDate%3D03%2F09%2F2022%26chamber%3D#tab2>

Bills of Interest

Bill	Short Title	Prime Sponsors	Current Status	Status Date
HB 28	Registration Of Boats: Exemption	HOUSE FISHERIES	(S) FIN	2/23/22
HB 30	Workers' Comp: Death; Perm Partial Impair	JOSEPHSON	(H) FIN	4/7/21
HB 55	Peace Officer/firefighter Retire Benefits	JOSEPHSON	(S) L&C	1/18/22
HB 56	Power Cost Equalization	FOSTER	(H) CRA	2/18/21
HB 64	Fishery Development Assoc.; Assessments	STUTES	(H) FIN	4/21/21
HB 75	Employer Contributions To Pers	RULES	(H) FIN	5/1/21
HB 88	Equal Pay & Minimum Wage Act	TARR	(H) STA	2/18/21
HB 134	Amhs Operation & Planning Board	RULES	(H) TRA	3/10/21
HB 135	Geothermal Resources	RULES	(H) FIN	1/27/22
HB 225	Municipal Property Tax Senior Exemption	GILLHAM	(H) CRA	1/18/22
HB 227	Muni Energy Improvemnt Assessment Program	SCHRAGE	(H) CRA	1/31/22
HB 247	Power Cost Equalization Fund	THOMPSON	(H) ENE	1/18/22
HB 322	AK Marine Hwy System Vessel Repl. Fund	HOUSE TRANSPORTATION	(H) TRA	2/14/22
HB 350	School Bond Debt Reimbursement	DRUMMOND	(H) EDC	2/22/22
HB 363	Broadband: Office, Grants, Parity	EDGMON	(H) L&C	2/22/22
HB 370	AK Energy And Broadband Authority	TUCK	(H) L&C	2/22/22

Bill	Short Title	Prime Sponsors	Current Status	Status Date
HB 371	Broadband Cost Equalization Fund	TUCK	(H) L&C	2/22/22
HB 393	Fishery Landing Tax Surcharge	MCCABE	(H) FSH	2/22/22
HJR 6	Const. Am: Approp Limit; Budget Reserve	RULES	(H) W&M	3/24/21
SB 6	Rip For Public Employees/teachers	KAWASAKI	(S) FIN	4/19/21
SB 9	Alcoholic Beverage Control; Alcohol Reg	MICCICHE	(H) FIN	2/22/22
SB 11	Community Property Trusts	BEGICH	(H) JUD	2/16/22
SB 15	Open Meetings Act; Penalty	COSTELLO	(S) FIN	4/21/21
SB 17	Energy Efficiency & Policy: Pub. Bldgs	BEGICH	(S) FIN	5/3/21
SB 37	Teachers & Pub Employee Retirement Plans	KIEHL	(S) L&C	1/25/21
SB 41	Health Insurance Info.; Incentive Program	HUGHES	(S) L&C	1/25/21
SB 100	State Income Tax	BEGICH	(S) STA	3/10/21
SB 170	Marine Highway Corporation	SENATE TRANSPORTATION	(S) TRA	1/21/22
SB 172	Property Tax Exemption	WIELECHOWSKI	(S) CRA	1/26/22